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ABSTRACT

This paper describes activities that school counselors can use in their work with adolescents. The suggested activities and resources are divided into three general groups according to purpose: Group 1, fun; Group 2, useful; and Group 3, professional. Group 1 presents ideas for counselors on engaging in enjoyable group sessions. Suggestions include: an "Adolescent Survival Kit," for icebreakers or closing activities; a guide for adolescents on developing good manners; and "The Wrecking Ball of Games and Activities," for working on building self-esteem, developing coping skills, and managing anger. Group 2 includes: "Medical Fact Sheets," in addition to suggestions and information on "Treatment for the Traumatized Child," "BodyWise Eating Disorders," and how to access an online subscription to activities and lessons plans for school counseling. Group 3 provides counselors with information on how to obtain continuing education credits and details on state and national organizations for counselors. (Contains 10 references.) (JDM)

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TEN TERRIFIC TOOLS:
RESOURCES FOR NEW AND VETERAN COUNSELORS

Presenter:
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OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION:

Group 1: Fun Stuff

Adolescent Survival Kit
The Wrecking Ball of Games and Activities
How Rude! The Teenagers Guide to Good Manners
Group Exercises for Adolescents

Group 2: Useful Stuff

CX-Online
Outreach Spanish
Medication Fact Sheets
Treating Traumatized Children
BodyWise Eating Disorders

Group 3: Professional Stuff

Counseling Today

Three additional tools participants are encouraged to explore:
DSM IV- TR, ACA/ASCA Journals, Business Cards

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PRESENTATION NOTES

Group 1: Fun Stuff

Adolescent Survival Kit:
Group sessions in the counseling office or in the classroom benefit from this hands-on tool. Contents of the kit are listed on the back of the reference list. Items can be placed simply in a ziploc bag or in anything that suits the group or counselor. Students of all ages enjoy this kit which can be used as an icebreaker or a closing activity in-group counseling, or a one-time presentation in the classroom.

The Wrecking Ball of Games and Activities:
This activity book is full of ideas for small and large group sessions with topics ranging from teamwork to self-esteem to anger management and coping skills. Each lesson presents a clear outline of objective, target group, group size, materials needed, description of activity, and discussion points. This tool can also be used in-group counseling or in the classroom. The activities are especially suited to Advisor/Advisee sessions at the middle and high school levels.

How Rude! The Teenagers Guide to Good Manners:
Many adolescents and even adults benefit from the teaching or review of good manners. This book is loaded with entertaining and useful activities covering every aspect of 'proper' behavior. Examples that have proven effective are 'The Ten Commandments of Telephone Etiquette,' 'The Thirty Commandments of Classroom Etiquette for Teachers,' and 'The Fourteen Commandments of Toiletiquette.' Each topic has a reproducible handout or transparency for use by the leader. Other topics cover behavior at home, in dating relationships, and during use of the Internet.

Group Exercises for Adolescents:
This is one of the best books available for use in small group counseling sessions. The sessions can be used sequentially as a group curriculum or selected as appropriate by the school counselor. Many reproducible handouts are included. Especially effective is the 'Group Statement' that defines guidelines for the group sessions. Topics include 'Living with Community,' 'Living with Identity,' 'Living with Family,' and 'Living with Sexuality,' with at least six activities for each.

Group 2: Useful Stuff

CX-Online:

Available by subscription only, this cost-effective career counseling tool has almost universal appeal to both students and faculty. Over 3,000 articles cover a wide variety of careers, with each article describing the job, the job outlook, education and training available, and links to related sites. Lessons are available for each article that cover math, communication, and decision making problems workers encounter. Extensive lesson plans are also provided on a variety of topics for all members of the faculty. Career assessments and a complete career development curriculum help students navigate the wealth of information available. Sessions can be held for individuals, small groups, or entire grade levels and are especially effective for the transition from middle to high school.

Outreach Spanish:

The influx of students into the schools who speak English as a second language has created challenges for school counselors, teachers, and other faculty members who must interact with them on a daily basis. This book covers a variety of issues faced and provides vocabulary and phrases that prove useful. Included is a chapter about sensitive counseling issues students may encounter. Some knowledge of Spanish is helpful when using this tool. A Spanish to English/English to Spanish glossary is provided.

Medication Fact Sheets:

Many students under a physician's care must take medication during the school day or the medication they take at home effects their academic performance or behavior. This guide helps school counselors, and other faculty, understand uses and side effects of commonly prescribed medications. Eighty medications are reviewed and a glossary of pharmacology terminology is included.

Treating Traumatized Children:

Trauma is a part of life and school counselors must have tools available to help them assess and treat students who have experienced past or current trauma. This excellent resource provides a thorough examination not only how to assess trauma but also provides highly usable and practical tools to use during counseling. Especially effective are the 'Garbage Bag,' the 'Clay Family,' and 'Clay Bombs.' Behavior Checklists are also included. This is a seminal book that every counselor should own.

BodyWise Eating Disorders:
Adolescents, especially females, struggle with issues of body image. A series of free handouts have been produced by the Office of Women's Health (part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) that provide specific information for counselors, teachers, and other school professionals who encounter students with eating problems. In addition handouts are included for students, and their friends, who struggle. Information on how eating disorders affect different ethnic and cultural groups completes this comprehensive packet. This information is easy to understand and easy to provide to other faculty and staff members.

Group 3: Professional Stuff

Counseling Today:
Finding the time to obtain continuing education credit is an ongoing issue for all professionals. School counselors who belong to the ACA receive a monthly publication (in newspaper form) called Counseling Today. Current events and articles about current issues in all areas of counseling are included. For an investment of just $10 and about one hour, counselors can read the paper and respond to a short quiz included for continuing education credit. Accomplishing two tasks in one effort is very attractive for anyone with a busy schedule.

Other professional 'stuff' - Terrific Tools 11, 12 &13:

DSM-IV-TR in pocket form is an excellent way for school counselors to facilitate their communication with community-based counselors or social service workers about student status.

ACA/ASCA Journals are published quarterly and sent to all members. The articles included may not always be relevant but at least one and sometimes several are written specifically for those in school environments. Reading just one article from each journal each quarter can provide a school counselor with useful information that can keep their school counseling practice current and relevant.

Business Cards may be considered by some an unnecessary expense. However, in a climate where counselors in all fields are trying to build their professional image, business cards promote this image to parents and community contacts. The business card is also an excellent networking tool between counselors.

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References

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Reference List (continued)

The following can be adapted for different age groups. This tool works especially well in small group counseling settings. Simply place the objects and slip of paper describing them in a paper lunch bag or plastic ziploc bag.

ADOLESCENT SURVIVAL KIT

Almond Joy: be joyful even when you feel the lumps
Band-Aids: to fix hurt feelings (yours or those you hurt)
Eraser: a reminder that every day can begin with a clean slate
Sweet Tarts: a reminder to appreciate the differences in others
Toothpick: to pick out the good in everyone, including yourself
Marbles: to replace those you might lose from time to time
Puzzle Piece: without you life would not be complete
Lifesavers: for when you are ready to give up
Crayons: to leave your mark today